

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)
Dalewood Elementary Accommodation Review Committee Meeting
Education Centre Board Room
September 14, 2011
Minutes (Working Meeting #5)

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair –Krys Croxall

Voting Members – Suzanne Brown, Maria Carbone, Nadia Coakley, Pamela Irving, Anita McGowan, Kim Newcombe, Emily Reid, Michael Reid, Kristen West

Non-Voting Members – Judith Bishop, Heidi Harper, Silvana Galli Lamarche, Joanne Hall, Margaret Jobson, Peter Martindale, Denise Minardi, Colleen Morgan, Michelle Rodney-Bartalos

Regrets

Voting Members –

Non-Voting Members – Debra Lewis, Brian McHattie

Resource Staff

Ellen Warling, Daniel Del Bianco, Ron Gowland, Robert Fex

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1. Call to Order – Superintendent Krys Croxall, Chair

Superintendent Krys Croxall welcomed everyone back to the fifth working group meeting.

The Chair welcomed all members of the public in attendance. She stated that the working group meetings of the ARC differed slightly from the “town hall” style public meetings in that any one that was not a member of the ARC was there in an observing capacity only.

2.0 Agenda - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Dalewood-ARC-agenda-Wednesday-September-14-2011.pdf>

2.1 Additions/Deletions –

3.0 A review of the minutes from Working Group Meeting #4 (September 14, 2011) was removed as an Agenda item as they were still being finalized by staff.

6.1 A review of the *financial summary* for the ARC concept scenarios was removed as an Agenda item and would be ready for the next meeting.

2.2 Approval of the Agenda -The amended agenda was approved by consensus.

4.0 Antonio Paez Presentation – “Walkable Schools for Sustainable Communities” – To view the presentation please click on the following link: http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Antonio_Paez_Presentation_Sept14_2011.pdf

Mr. Paez made a presentation to the Committee and spoke of walk ability within the community. He shared that children, who are between the ages 5-11, should engage in 60 minutes per day of physical activity. When the students walk to school this provides them with 15-20 minutes of activity per day. This is beneficial for the parents as well. Statistics show that healthy children make better scholars. He stated that exercise is a simple but important piece to enhance a child’s academic performance.

Maintaining physical fitness and physical activity through puberty will have favourable health benefits in later years. Transportation choices during childhood may influence transportation choices in adulthood. When walking to school people have interaction with other children and adults therefore supporting community building. They have a feeling of connection.

Mr. Paez stated that 13.9 million was spent on transportation by the HWDSB in 2008 and 2009. He shared that bussing rates in the Dalewood schools are relatively low, and cater mainly to the special needs students.

In conclusion Mr. Paez stated the following:

- Walkable schools hold great potential for creating socially, environmentally, fiscally sustainable communities
- In the case of Dalewood ARC, this potential is best held by:
 - Three schools in their current locations (fiscally realistic?)
 - Two schools: G.R.A. & P.P.
 - The least sustainable alternative:
 - Closure of G.R.A. or close P.P.

Questions:

Q. Have you looked at the projections provided?

A. I saw the one presented at the start of the process and I felt a bit sceptical about the amount of projected decline in the community. Student rentals can often discourage new families from moving into the neighbourhood. The construction of new condominiums in the area should decrease the need for university student rental housing. With these students moving out of the community, the potential exists for young families to move in, especially because of the lower price point of these homes once you factor in the renovations required to convert these homes back to single family dwellings. I feel that the children population will stabilize in this neighbourhood.

Q. Are there other communities in Ontario, adjacent to a University, where student population grows or stabilizes without new construction?

A. In Kingston they are experiencing the same phenomenon surrounding Queen’s University. The challenge with mature communities is that people don’t want to leave their homes anymore and the turn over is over a prolonged period of time.

Mr. Paez indicated that Ainslie woods community is not decreasing as rapidly as other communities in Hamilton.

C. A small percentage of students attending Prince Philip and Dalewood have always required transportation to get to school. 47% of our bussing costs come from special needs student bussing. Costs saving on bussing will not come anywhere near the costs of repairing our schools.

A. Any transportation savings achieved through the accommodation options cannot be used to fund capital needs, however these would decrease the Board's overall transportation costs.

C. You didn't comment on Dalewood being a walkable school. It also is a walkable school.

A. Dalewood is also a very walkable school as it is located central to the community.

C. We have discovered that the costs for repairing these three schools is not as high as previously indicated. I would like to see the actual cost of these repair needs. I do not think that the schools will fall apart in the next 3-5 years. I would like to see things stay as status quo and then look at the situation five years down the road and see if the enrolment numbers are stable.

A. Any money saved on transportation does not get allocated to another area of the budget – we simply do not receive the extra money.

C. The ReCAPP data and the 18 to 1 dollar value apply to the whole Board not just this ARC.

5.0 Review of Data Requested by the Committee – Daniel Del Bianco

Mr. Del Bianco reviewed the materials that were distributed to the Committee members for the evening.

There was discussion on the Inventory Data Room Summary. Ellen Warling and Ron Gowland went out and physically looked at the schools to confirm that the SFIS data was correct.

Q. What is the process to update or change the room status?

A. We have to contact the Ministry of Education and have the room inventory updated. There will be an audit of the information in the future so currently the update is done on the honour basis.

Classrooms are loaded by the Ministry of Education. Libraries and gym spaces are not loaded. There is a particular size that can be classed as a resource room. A computer room is loaded. Each teaching space is loaded. How the computer labs and libraries are run or scheduled is up to the Board. Specialized rooms are loaded as a teaching space. The Ministry of Education included only permanent brick and mortar rooms in their capacity calculation. If it is non-permanent space, then it is not counted towards school capacity.

Mr. Del Bianco spoke about the student plots and indicated that these include the Special Ed students as well. A dot represents an address and it could indicate one or more students. The student plots were created using 2010 enrolment information.

Q. Is there any meaning behind the Board Report's wording which suggests "possible consolidation" verses just "consolidation"?

A. Not that I am aware of.

Q. What is the Board's capital priorities submission?

A. We create a list of capital priorities that is submitted to the Ministry of Education. They look at all submissions to determine which school boards will receive capital dollars.

Q. Can we add to the Agenda to discuss the discrepancy between the FCI in the Board report and the FCI that the ARC received in their data?

Q. Will we get transportation data tonight?

A. Not tonight.

C. Funding for the full day kindergarten implementation is outside of the ARC.

6.0 Review of Concept options proposed by the ARC -

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Dalewood-Options-Summaries-Presentation-Sept-14-2011.pdf>

6.2 Grade Structure/Program Options - Ellen Warling

C. A member of the Committee shared his concerns over not receiving the financial data and felt that the meeting should have been cancelled if the financial information was not available.

A. The Chair shared that the Committee still needed to meet to discuss programming and the upcoming public meeting. She apologized that the member was feeling disgruntled and shared that due to the Dalewood ARCs tight schedule every effort had been made to provide the information however it was not finalized in time.

C. Another member spoke of Option 2 and indicated that having the French Immersion (FI) in Prince Philip just didn't make sense. He felt that there would be too many split grades which would affect programming and the students at large. He felt that it should be eliminated as an option.

There was discussion on option #2. Some of the comments that were shared are as follows:

- JK-8 schools having only one gym often have gym classes two times per week as opposed to Dalewood School where they currently have gym daily. In most JK-8 schools there is not the flexibility and staff to offer the type of programming that they have at Dalewood. You also would not receive the specialized programming that is currently available at Dalewood.
- The Chair shared that new schools are typically built large so that they can have this type of flexibility and specialized programming. You do need a dedicated music teacher for a music program.

- Another member shared that in all three models K-8, middle school or JK-5 it is the staff, the parents and the students that make the school great.
- The Chair shared that from the curriculum perspective she felt that it is important to have the specialist programs available, especially for grade 7 and 8 students, which prepares them for programs offered in high school.

There was discussion around the staffing needs based on enrolments in a school. They spoke of specialized programming, specialized classrooms, school sizes and transitioning into new schools. The members shared their perspectives and experiences that they had as students.

C. Consistently schools that have an enrolment of 200 students or less have had to look at closing due to sustainability of the school.

Q. What is the number of students you need to have an FI program?

A. We have started with less than 20 students in a class; however, it is a gamble. In this particular case the class dwindled and we had split classes all of the way up.

Q. Is that K-5 or K-8?

A. We have had both.

Consensus was given to remove Options 2 & 3 and add Option 13:

Option #13 - Dalewood closing – (old option 3) and moving FI to GR Allan (JK-8, Eng, FI) and the Mandarin to Prince Philip (JK-8, Eng, JK-3 Mandarin).

7.0 Preparation for Public Meeting

At the third public meeting the Committee would be required to take their options to the public. There was discussion around adding and/or switching meetings dates.

Consensus was given to move the Public Meeting (#3) to October 5, 2011 and use September 27, 2011 as a working group meeting.

Consensus was given to wait until after the September 27, 2011 meeting to request the extension of the final ARC report deadline. A working group meeting for October 12, 2011 was added to the ARC meeting schedule.

Consensus was given to extend the meeting until 9:20 p.m.

A request was made to have the financial information provided to the Committee in advance of the next working group meeting.

Consensus was given to receive that information in advance.

Ms. Warling requested that the information not be shared beyond the Committee and to send any questions that the Committee has to Tracy McKillop and she will forward them on to resource staff.

Consensus was given to defer the discussion of Councillor McHattie's letter until the next working group meeting.

8.0 Correspondence - Councillor McHattie's letter was redistributed to all Committee members.

9.0 Other Business –

Q. What would be the per acre price of the school sites if they were sold?

A. The average sale price is \$400,000 per acre.

10.0 Adjournment - Consensus was given to adjourn at 9:13 p.m.

DRAFT